

## Message Text

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47

ACTION SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4215

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 0856

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CZ

SUBJECT: YOUTH PARA

REF: STATE 70302

1. INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION, ESPECIALLY SINCE 1968 SOVIET INVASION, REALLY INHIBITS ANY EMBASSY YOUTH PROGRAM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA. DIFFICULTIES IN APPROACHING AND CONTACTING CZECHOSLOVAK CITIZENS ON ANY BUT OFFICIAL LEVEL LIMIT OUR TAKING INITIATIVE; RATHER THAN ASSIGNING PERCENTAGES IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS POSED REFTTEL, CERTAIN BASIC GENERALIZATIONS MIGHT BE MORE USEFUL.

2. IN TERMS OF TARGET GROUPS AMONG YOUTH, YOUNG MANAGERIAL TYPES IN GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES SHOULD RECEIVE MOST ATTENTION. THESE REPRESENT ALMOST THE ONLY YOUTHFUL INDIVIDUALS WITH WHOM EMBASSY OFFICERS CAN MAINTAIN CONTINUED CONTACT, AND THEY SHOULD BECOME INCREASINGLY INFLUENTIAL IN CZECHOSLOVAK'S FUTURE AS "MANAGERIAL CLASS" BECOMES MORE IMPORTANT IN DECISION MAKING AND IMPLEMENTATION. IN TERMS OF U. S. INTERESTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND PRIMARILY IN FIELD OF TRADE, THIS GROUP IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT. ACCESS TO AND POSSIBLE INFLUENCE OVER SEGMENT OF YOUTH MOVING UP IN COMMUNIST PARTY APPARATUS IS NIL. YOUNG PEOPLE IN CULTURAL AND

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JOURNALISTIC FIELDS ARE PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE FOR REGIME AND ANY BUT MOST INFORMAL EFFORTS AIMED IN THEIR DIRECTION MUST BE CONDITIONED BY THIS SENSITIVITY. AS INDICATED BELOW, EMBASSY'S CULTURAL PROGRAM PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR ESTABLISHING CONTACTS AND LAYING GROUNDWORK FOR CONTINUING INFORMATIONAL PROGRAM. CONCLUSION OF EXCHANGES AGREEMENT NOW ANTICIPATED WILL CREATE FORMAL BASIS FOR SOME CONTACTS AND ACTIVITIES NOT NOW FEASIBLE.

3. OUR IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES AMONG YOUNGER OFFICIALS RELATE CLOSELY TO FOSTERING CLIMATE CONDUCTIVE TO BILATERAL TRADE, WHILE OF COURSE STRIVING TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN OVER ALL FAVORABLE OFFICIAL ATTITUDES TOWARD U. S. WE CAN ALSO MAKE SOME LIMITED USE OF THESE CONTACTS TO UNDERSTAND AND FOLLOW POLITICAL AND SOCIAL TRENDS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

4. OUR MAIN RESOURCE WILL BE PERSONAL CONTACT AT OFFICIAL LEVEL. OPPORTUNITIES TO COME INTO CONTACT WITH YOUTH IN SPORTS ACTIVITIES AND DURING AMERICAN CULTURAL EVENTS, SUCH AS VISIT OF MUSICAL GROUPS, GIVE US POTENTIAL TO DEVELOP MEANINGFUL INDIVIDUAL RELATIONSHIPS. WE SHOULD CONTINUE SELECTIVELY TO OFFER GRANTS OF ALL TYPES, CONCENTRATING ON THOSE YOUNG PEOPLE RISING IN OFFICIAL AND CULTURAL ELITES. SOME RESOURCES COULD BE ALLOCATED TO PROGRAMS FOR YOUNGER CZECH BUSINESS TYPES WHO MAY VISIT U. S. ON COMMERCIAL TRIPS, WHICH MIGHT INCLUDE TOURS OF PLANTS, RECEPTION BY COMMERCE OFFICIALS, AND SIMILAR PROGRAMS.

5. RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH IN CZECH LANDS MUST BE RATED LOW. YOUNGER GENERATION IN GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMY TENDS TO RISE SLOWLY, AND AVERAGE AGE OF DECISION-MAKERS IN ALL FIELDS IS FAIRLY HIGH. CZECHOSLOVAK REGIME, TYPICALLY FOR COMMUNIST EUROPE, IS NOT "YOUTHFUL" IN ANY SENSE, IS CONSERVATIVE, UNIMAGINATIVE, AND PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH CONTINUITY OF ITS OWN POWER. YOUNG PEOPLE TEND TO HAVE SKEPTICAL

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VIEW OF WORLD AND MAJORITY OF YOUTH TENDS TO STEER CLEAR OF POLITICS ALTOGETHER. IN SLOVAKIA, WHICH IN SENSE IS "YOUNGER" DEVELOPING AREA THAN CZECH LANDS, WE HAVE IMPRESSION THAT YOUNGER PEOPLE PLAY SLIGHTLY GREATER ROLE IN POLITICS, ECONOMY AND CULTURE, AND SLOVAK YOUTH'S IMPORTANCE SHOULD BE RATED "MEDIUM." WE WOULD HOPE TO DEVELOP MORE CONTACTS AMONG SLOVAK

YOUNGER GENERATION ONCE WE REOPEN BRATISLAVA CONSULATE.

6. IN CONCLUSION WE MUST STRESS THAT CZECHOSLOVAK  
YOUTH IN GENERAL IS STRONGLY INCLINED TOWARDS UNITED  
STATES, MUCH MORE SO THAN IN MOST WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.  
WE HOPE FUTURE WILL PROVIDE US AT LEAST SOMEWHAT GREATER  
OPPORTUNITIES TO CAPITALIZE ON THIS FACT.  
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